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September 17, 2003

Chief, Regulations and Procedures Division
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
P.O. Box 50221
Ohio House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20091-0221
Attn: Notice 4
Chris R. Widener, FAIA
State Representative Dear Sir or Madam:

84th House District
Madison and Parts of Clark and As a member of the Ohio General Assembly with an interest in the regulated
Greene Counties beverage industry, I am writing to express my support for the U.S. Treasury's

Capitol Office Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau proposed rulemaking for flavored malt

Riffe Center beverages. (2001R-136P)

77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6111 I believe the TTB's action is an important clarification of federal alcohol beverage
toll free: (800) 282-0253 categories established to maintain an orderly US marketplace. Further, I believe the
telephone: (614) 466-1470 debate surrounding the proposed standard poses important issues for the stability of
fax: (614) 644-9494 the retail licensing system and the overall marketplace.

e-mail: District84@ohr.state.oh.us

www.house.state.oh.us With my support for the proposed 0.5% standard, I am joining The Beer Institute,

Committees the National Beer Wholesalers Association, and major small brewer associations,
among many others, because this standard is the most efficient means to address

Vice-Chair recent concerns by both federal and state officials. If adopted, the standard will
Civil and Commercial Law maintain an orderly marketplace, meet consumer expectations for consistent
products, and help sustain the long-term development of the product category. In
Member addition, these reformulated products will be consistent with state tax, license, and
Agriculture & Natural distribution laws allowing wholesalers and retailers to continue to distribute, sell and
Resources market flavored malt beverages as they do today.

Banking, Pensions &
Securities However, absent a national standard rooted in existing law and regulation,
manufacturers, retailers, and wholesales will face a potential for a patchwork of

Commerce & Labor individual state laws and regulations where the same product may ultimately be sold
as a "beer" in one state and as a "distilled spirits" in another.

Homeland Security and

Architectural Design Finally, while there are some who have concerns regarding the ability of

manufactures to produce FMB products in accordance with the new proposal, as you

Public Utilities

may know, brewers have already demonstrated the expertise and technical ability to
brew these products under the new federal standard. The FMB products that look
and taste the same will be available to wholesalers and retailers in all states with no
interruption and discernable taste differences for consumers.

Thank you for this opportunity for me to offer my support for the current TTB
proposed rulemaking for flavored malt beverages.

Chris Widener
State Representative
84th House District